



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN THE USE OF DRIED FLOWERS TO BE USED AS CRAFTS THAT HAVE A HIGH SELLING VALUE

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Abstract:

Natural resources in the form of chrysanthemum flowers in Bandungan have not been optimally utilized by paguyuban and youth coral cadets. As a solution is to provide devotion in the form of innovation in the use of flowers in improving the economy of the community. The purpose of this devotion is: first, to introduce alternative products of cut flowers. Two, providing flower drying training. Third, create and build new businesses in the field of flower drying. The method used in this devotion is a training or production workshop consisting of flower drying training with manual techniques (*airy drying*) and *pressing* techniques. Continued with training in making dry flower bouquets and resin accessories. The implementation of devotional activities involves 3 hamlets including Duren Village consisting of Clapar Hamlet, Kropoh Hamlet, and Mejing Hamlet. The process of activities carried out by providing information, timeline, materials related to the craft of flowers both how to make and marketing. The program of devotional activities introduces alternative models in the form of training to utilize the agricultural potential of chrysanthemum crafting that can provide economic improvement and welfare for youth coral cadets and flower association.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Utilization Of Dried Flowers, Chrysanthemum Craft, Flower Craft Innovation

INTRODUCTION

As a tropical country, Indonesia has great potential in developing commodities that are often referred to as part of floricultural commodity branches or flowering plant commodities and ornamental plants. Floriculture itself is included in the horticulture branch with vegetables. The Ministry of Agriculture pointed out that in 2015 the area of floriculture harvest and production reached 23,376,355 ha and 846,555,728 stalks, respectively. Chrysanthemums, roses, evening flowers and orchids are the most widely cultivated flowers in Indonesia with a total production share reaching 86.29% (Harniati, H., & Jamil, 2020).

In addition to the land and weather is very possible, the biodiversity of Indonesian floriculture is extraordinary. That is, the country has the opportunity to develop the commodity into a business opportunity, both for the provision of domestic and world needs. In these commodities one of them is cut flowers, where the cut flowers fall into the category of ornamental plants. According to Gunawan in (Putra, F.C. K., Indriani, Y., & Riantini, 2021), ornamental plants are plants that have beauty value both because of the shape, color of leaves, headers and flowers, often used as decorating yards or rooms in homes or office buildings.

Clapar Village located in Bandungan District is quite potential. This is because of its supportive geographical location, located on the slopes of Mount Ungaran which is suitable for the cultivation of chrysanthemum flowers. Bandungan subdistrict is a plateau with a soil height of ±600 meters - ±900 meters above sea level and has a fairly high soil fertility. The geographical keadan makes Bandungan District widely spread cultivation of chrysanthemum flower ornamental plants.

Based on the Central Statistics Agency in 2019, Bandungan District ranked first with the result of flower production reaching 114,210,000 stalks at 1,603,000^m² of harvest land area. And one of the suppliers is gemah ripah farmers group in Clapar village. In this village there are a total of 180 *green houses* that have their respective functions, ranging from nursery to production.

However, in early 2020 there has been a wind disaster that resulted in dozens of *green houses* being lightly damaged and 5 others severely damaged which rendered it unusable. The high cost of renovation and or rebuilding makes farmers reluctant to continue their business. Coupled with the covid-19 pandemic, many provide obstacles for

the community, especially the condition of farmers who are getting worse, many are turning into vegetable farmers and there are also those who continue to grow flowers despite having suffered one-harvest losses.

In 2016 Clapar Hamlet had opened an agrotourism called Kampung Krisan Gemah Ripah which is managed by the Gemah Ripah Farmers Group. However, this agrotourism was closed due to a large wind that damaged part of *the green house*. The closure of agrotourism certainly has an impact on the decline in the income of flower farmers in Clapar Hamlet. Not a few losses to be suffered. This makes farmers have to twist their brains in order to get more income than supplying flowers to big cities.

In addition, nursery facilities collapsed due to age so that when hit by disasters, many *green houses* or cultivation houses are not worth using. Investment does not come because the interest business is quiet. As a result, the youth, farmers, and coral groups of cadets there are unemployed. This is what makes the reason for the devotion program to revive the abandoned flower business. Youth as a milestone of village movers must innovate so that in the future do not only rely on income from flower cutting and nursery only.

The solution is through a program of devotional activities introduction of alternative models in the form of training to utilize the potential of flower farming in the field of arts, in the form of drying with *dried flower* methods and flower *pressed flowers* such as resin making and dried flower bouquets. In addition to utilizing flowers that are not sold, making resin crafts and bouquets of dried flowers is needed easy materials and making it is not too difficult. So that it will be able to be practiced well by various ages, not just the coral cadets of Claparnya Hamlet.

Resin is a liquid-shaped chemical, resembling cooking oil but somewhat viscous. Different types of resin. For fiberglass craft materials, generally use clear resin or *butekresin*. Clear resin is usually used for shapes that accentuate its transparent (clear), such as key chains, imitations of crystal crafts, chandelier accessories, and shirt buttons. Butek resin is commonly used for crafts such as chairs, cassette racks, airplanes, helmets, and figurines (D. L. Sanggarang, 2004). In this training use clear resin with dried flowers as a decorator. So that it will look the color, motif, and curves of the beautiful chrysanthemum flowers even though they have been dried.

A bouquet of flowers or flower arrangements is a collection of several types of flowers and leaves arranged in creative form (Pramono, F., Sunarya, Y. Y., & Saidi, 2019). Generally, a bouquet of flowers is made of fresh flowers that are beautifully arranged and shaped. But it will not last long and will wither in a short period of time. Then came the idea of utilizing flowers that do not sell and dried into a series of charming bouquets. The same relative price is even cheaper accompanied by its durability that makes a product of high value.

The creativity of young cadet coral members must be stimulated by entrepreneurial opportunities that take advantage of local potential. In addition, resin and a bouquet of dried flowers will be an idea for a sustainable flower business because it has a high selling value and can be an alternative. This resin and bouquet of dried flowers comes as a driver of creativity of young people and flower farmers amid the impasse in flower seed commodities and flower cut.

The potential is quite supportive of kampung clapar cadet corals, and variations of flower drying methods can continue to be improved so that more flowers can be utilized. Through *the* method of dried flowers (dried flowers), and also *pressed flowers* (pres) for the manufacture of resin crafts and bouquets of dried flowers can be accessories that are glimpsed by many people or even become an icon of Clapar Village itself. The existence of many efforts through the empowerment of the potential of natural resources and human resources can be realized well. Increases in the economic sector can also increase, one of which is also to reduce unemployment.

METHOD

This community empowerment program is carried out offline limited by involving partners from local cadet corals numbering 15 people. Mitra comes from 3 hamlets, namely the hamlets of Clapar, Kropoh, and Mejing. There are 7 main workshops and 1 business exhibition. Before this series of training activities are carried out, the partner is presented with a questionnaire containing several question points regarding knowledge about flower drying, as well as readiness to carry out training activities to be given. After all activities are carried out, partners are also given questionnaires as a measurement of the success of this training as well as the impact of the resulting.

Socialization and Devotional Work

Socialization is an introduction to the design of devotion that will be carried out in Duren Village for 4-5 months. In this activity brought together many parties involved for support, one of which was the Duren Village apparatus itself. Before doing flower drying training we did devotional work to clean the place that will be used as a flower drying room in one of the farmer's greenhouses in Clapar Hamlet.

Production Workshop

In this devotion there are 3 main activities, namely production workshops, marketing workshops and business exhibitions. Production workshops aim to provide skills training around producing dried flowers, such as flower drying training with *airy drying* methods or traditional techniques using room temperature (Lydia Waskito Setiawan, 2009).

Then training in drying flowers with *pressed flower techniques*, making dry flower bouquets, wall displays (*pressed flower frames*), and lastly is training in making resin accessories. Activities at the workshop are produced individually and in groups with equipped tools and materials for each training. In addition to introducing the drying of

flowers manually, this activity as a means/medium *bounding* to familiarize partners between hamlets who previously did not know each other.

Marketing Workshop

Marketing workshops are also *bundling* workshop activities around product marketing. The purpose of marketing workshops is to introduce partners with product packaging and marketing processes that are useful for building product image in consumers. This activity consists of Training, which is basic graphic design training using canva application, product photo training using gadgets and correcting colors in photos, creating *e-commerce* and social media for business. This spirit is present so that partners can have a view on how to start a business and beautify the packaging and photos of their product catalog.

Sanflowtion Business Exhibition

Sanflowtion is an acronym for Crisan Flower Exhibition, an activity dedicated to showing off the output of training products for 3 months in Clapar Hamlet, Bandungan Subdistrict. Sanflowtion is held for two days in 2 most popular tourist destinations in Bandungan, namely Gedong Songo Temple Tourism Area and Umbul Sidomukti. This activity was attended by the Tourism Office of Semarang Regency and the Cooperative Office of Micro-Industrial and Trade Enterprises (Diskumperindag) of Semarang Regency. The purpose of this business exhibition is to establish cooperation with tourism so that later it can be used as a place to market flower products as souvenirs typical of Bandungan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Planning becomes a basic step in an activity, planning is also an important point of running an activity because without careful planning an activity will not run smoothly. Therefore, the planning must be carefully, thoroughly and carefully. Planning activities carried out are the determination of target areas, interviews and observations of target areas, problem analysis after observation and interviews, designing activities and applying for cooperation with partners.

The implementation of devotional activities involves 3 hamlets including Duren Village consisting of Clapar Hamlet, Kropoh Hamlet, and Mejing Hamlet. The process of activities carried out by providing information, timeline, materials related to the craft of flowers both how to make and marketing. Activities carried out include (1) flower drying training, (2) resin training, and (3) bouquet training.

Flower drying training

Flower drying activities are carried out ranging from flower selection strategies to *pressing* practices with three categories (1) *Dried Flower*, (2) *Pressed Flower*, (3) *Preserved flower*. *Dried Flower* has three techniques. *Pertama*, outdoor or outdoors exposed to direct sunlight takes approximately 7 days for the flowers to dry. *Second*, semi outdoor or indoors that still have light or are still exposed to sunlight indirectly takes 8 days for the flowers to dry. *Third*, indoor or indoors that are not exposed to sunlight takes 10 to 14 days for the flowers to dry.

Flowers are hung in an inverted flower position so as not to damage the structure of the flower so that the original shape of the flower can be maintained. Preparations are carried out before the implementation of flower drying training with this *dried flower* method is to prepare fresh flowers, hairspray that will be sprayed on flowers, raffia ropes, scissors, and green *houses* as a place to lay flowers during the drying process. Flowers produced through this method will become the perfect dried flower and can be used as the basic material for making an attractive bouquet of dried flowers.



Figure 1 drying semi outdoor flowers

Pressed flower is the drying of flowers by pressing using a special tool flower press (Rina Oshibana, 2012). *Pressed flowers* first appeared in Japan in the 16th century under the name "oshibana". "Oshi" means pressed and "bana" means flower. The term oshibana in English, called pressed flower, means press flower or press flower. The manufacture of pressed flowers at that time aims to preserve the beauty of flowers to a flat shape that will later be applied to crafts to add aesthetic value (Hapsari, A. S., & Lutfiati, 2020).

This method takes 14 days for the flowers to become perfectly dry. Preparation, which is done before this activity is to prepare some fresh flower stalks that will be cut into pieces in the drying process, prepare *presstools*,

papers as a base or barrier in the drying process. The results obtained from the training process of drying flowers with this *press* method are dried flowers with a flat shape that can be used as a basic material for making key chains and other trinkets from resin.



Figure 2 press flower demonstration

Preserved Flower, is an attempt to turn a flower that is almost withered and worthless into a product that is worth selling (Wirakusumah, 2018). Drying this flower uses *silica gell* with a time range of 8-10 days so that the dried flower is ready to use. Not all flowers can be dried with *silica gell*; it must be flowers that have large and thick petals.

Silica gell is the most widely used dryer medium, because the reaction is very fast. *Silica gell* is capable of absorbing water up to 50% of its weight. It looks like a clear blue crystal grain. After absorbing water, *silica gell* will change color to pink to clear. This discoloration is a clue that *silica gell* is saturated and can not absorb water anymore (Prabawati, 2006).

Before the implementation of this method, the tools and materials prepared are almost the same as the previous methods, but here is a very important material that is *silica gell* used to dry the flowers. From this training the result obtained is the flower dry perfectly without damaging the petals, so that after the flower is dry, still with the perfect petal shape.



Figure 3 demonstration preserved flower (resin)

Resin Training

Resin is a sap derived from plants, its character quickly freezes, forming a solid mass, resins including composite materials that cannot conduct electric current (are insulators) (Yani, M., & Lubis, 2018). Resin is transparent, cannot be dissolved by water, flammable, resin has been used since ancient times according to some sources, organic resin is used as varnish or adhesive, examples of resin resin resin as a sculpture, with the development of chemical resin technology created, whose uses such as melamine, epoxy, acrylic and so on, resin is used by people mainly as adhesives, coatings for shiny food, mixed ingredients of perfume, varnish and so on (Asmi, D., Yulianti, Y., & Kiswandono, 2019). Resin is a chemical that is liquid in shape, resembling cooking oil, but rather viscous.

Resin making training activities are housed in one of the cadet coral partners in Clapar Hamlet. The method used when the activity takes place is the practicum method. Tutors provide participants with practice opportunities to improve skills as an application of knowledge they have previously learned. Participants of this training are cadet corals in Clapar Hamlet. This resin training is considered very important in order to minimize the failures that can occur during the manufacturing process. The resulting product is keychains such as alphabetical shapes and numbers.



Figure 4 keychains produced by partners

The resin used in this training is a liquid chemical, resembling cooking oil, but somewhat viscous, various types of resin, for fiberglass souvenirs / accessories (Muis, a., & fibriani, 2018), generally use clear resin to accentuate its coolness, can also be used as a substitute for mica, while for cloudy resin is more widely used for the manufacture of souvenirs that are not translucent, Resin is easy to buy in chemical stores and cheap (Ni Made Ary Widiastini, Nyoman Dini Andiani, 2017).

The decoration of the inside of the resin is taken from chrysanthemum flowers and dried leaves that are found in the hamlet of Clapar. Decoration in the resin needs to be dried first because the water content in the living tissues of plants and animals will cause the formation of air bubbles in the resin. Drying of leaves and flowers is done by *means of dried flowers semi outdoor* or indoors that are still exposed to sunlight that takes 8 days for the flowers to dry and press *flowers* with flowers pressed using a special flower press tool that takes 14 days for the flower to dry perfectly.

Resin training activities received positive responses from participants. Participants feel that this activity is very useful to be able to increase knowledge and skills regarding the type of resin and its application. Participants showed an enthusiastic attitude to participate in the activities, understanding and practice is also very good. With this resin training, it is expected that in the future participants make a variety of accessories from unique resins and can be created into various shapes and designs that are beautiful and attractive can be an entrepreneurial opportunity.

Dry Flower Bouquet Training

Flower arrangements or commonly called bouquets are a collection of several types of flowers and leaves arranged in creative form (Susanti, 2017). Bouquets are ordered for home or general decorating needs. Flower arrangements are classified based on their shape and model such as bunches of flowers, sickle arrangements, and multilevel arrangements. Bouquets are available on special occasions such as weddings, and birthdays. Flower arrangements can also be placed in vases for home décor in either the traditional or modern style. The symbolism or meaning of flower arrangements will depend on the type of flower used and the culture of the local community.

Generally, a bouquet of flowers is made of fresh flowers that are beautifully arranged and shaped. But it will not last long and will wither in a short period of time. Then came the idea to utilize flowers that do not sell and wasted to be dried into a unique and charming bouquet of flowers. The relatively same price is even cheaper accompanied by its long shelf life resistance that makes a product of high economic value.

Dried flowers are flowers that have gone through the process of drying or dehydrating naturally. So that the flower will become completely dry, which for coloring still has to go through one more process to look fresher. One of the advantages of being a dried flower as a bouquet is because of its very easy care. It's just that, the weakness of this one flower when compared to preserved flowers is its easily broken stalks, petals that fall easily, and colors that so quickly fade (Damasha, 2020).

Training in making dry flower bouquets given to a number of members of the cadet coral group in Clapar Hamlet had a very positive impact. From these activities the partners are taught about various techniques and tips in arranging dried flowers into a beautiful bouquet of flowers. In addition, this activity indirectly also trains the patience of the craftsmen, because in the process of making a bouquet of dried flowers requires good accuracy and skills.

This dry flower bouquet training activity is guided directly by a professional in the field of crafting a bouquet of flowers. Thus the partners can also learn directly and in depth about the art of arranging a bouquet of dried flowers. From this activity, the partners managed to make a variety of dry flower bouquets with varying shapes. The bouquet of dried flowers produced by these partners is arguably quite satisfying for a beginner who is just learning to arrange flowers.



Figure 5 Bouquet of dried flowers by partners

The bouquet of dried flowers produced by this partner will be repaired and beautified again to then take pictures and start to be marketed. From this dry flower bouquet making training activity, the partners are equipped with new skills and knowledge about the techniques of flower arranging. With the new skills possessed by this partner is expected to be useful and used as their provision for entrepreneurship. Because now there are many dry flower businesses, who take advantage of the opportunity. The more here, the dry flower trend is increasingly in demand, especially for people who like *vintage*, *aesthetic*, to *rustic* themes.

CONCLUSION

The program of devotional activities introduction of alternative models in the form of training to utilize the potential of flower farming in the field of art, in the form of drying with *dried flower* methods and *pressed flower* flowers such as resin making and dry flower bouquets carried out in Clapar Hamlet, Bandungan Subdistrict has a positive impact on young coral cadets and the surrounding community. Through this training activity, partners who are members of the program can gain new knowledge and skills in processing dried flowers into trinkets and crafts that have high selling value. With the increasing creativity of these young people becomes one of the milestones in empowering the community to improve the surrounding economy. Processed products from dried flowers in the form of resin crafts and bouquets of flowers are a new innovation produced by the youth of Clapar Hamlet cadet corals that can later be continued production to then be marketed to the outside community so that the craft products can be better known. As a follow-up to this activity, it is expected that village stakeholders can provide encouragement and can develop the potential of the village and can provide direction and evaluation for the sustainability of activities that can change the economy in Clapar Hamlet, Duren Village, Bandungan Subdistrict, Semarang Regency

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